

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 138287

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN

SUBJ: DEPUTY SECRETARY CONVERSATION WITH INDIAN
AMBASSADOR

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR KAUL CAME IN ON HIS INITIATIVE, ACCOMPANIED BY GONSALVES AND VERMA. SAMUELS AND LAINGEN SAT IN. KAUL NOTED WHAT WERE ON BALANCE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH ASIA IN RECENT WEEKS. HOPED WE WOULD ENCOURAGE BHUTTO IN DIRECTION MODERATION AND GIVE HIM NO ENCOURAGEMENT TO CONTRARY, PARTICULARLY NOT ON ARMS. ALSO NOTED SHAH'S UPCOMING VISIT AND STRESSED INDIA'S DESIRE FOR CLOSE RELATIONS WITH BOTH IRAN AND PAKISTAN. EMPHASIZED INDIA'S COMMITMENT FOR IMPROVED US/INDIA RELATIONS. ALSO REVIEWED BRIEFLY INDIA'S NEED
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FOR FOODGRAINS FROM US. RUSH RECIPROCATED DESIRE FOR BETTER BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS. NOTED THAT BOTH IRAN AND INDIA HAVE EMPHASIZED THEIR INTEREST IN PEACEFUL AND STABLE PAKISTAN AND SAID THAT IN THIS CONTEXT INDIA'S

EXPRESSED FEAR OF PAKISTAN'S INTENTIONS SEEMED NOT REALISTIC. END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR KAUL NOTED THAT SINCE HE HAD LAST SEEN DEPUTY SECRETARY THERE HAD BEEN ON BALANCE POSITIVE TRENDS IN SUBCONTINENT, CITING PARTICULARLY JUST ANNOUNCED INDO-PAK MEETING ON JULY 24. ANOTHER POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT HAD BEEN AUTHORIZATION TO BHUTTO, BY PAK ASSEMBLY

ON RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH WHICH INDIA HOPED BHUTTO WOULD USE TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS. EARLIER THERE BEEN INDO/BANGLADESH JOINT DELCARATION OF APRIL 17 ON HUMANITARIAN ISSUES IN SOUTH ASIA, ON WHICH JULY 24 MEETING WOULD FOCUS AND WHICH REPRESENTED MAJOR OPPORTUNITY FOR PEACE IN SOUTH ASIA. THERE HAD BEEN NEGATIVE DEVELOPMENTS AS WELL, INCLUDING SOME OF BHUTTO'S RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS, ESPECIALLY HIS ALLUSION TO LEGACY OF "ONE THOUSAND YEARS CONFLICT" IN SUBCONTINENT. INDIA HAD BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO THIS KIND OF TALK FROM BHUTTO; IT WAS CONCERNED ABOUT IT BUT DID NOT PROPOSE TO TAKE ALL OF IT TOO SERIOUSLY. NEVERTHELESS SINCE HE WAS PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN, INDIA OBVIOUSLY COULD NOT IGNORE THIS KIND OF THING. KAUL SAID HE HOPED THAT WHEN BHUTTO CAME TO US HE WOULD BE THE STATESMAN HE PROFESSES TO BE SINCE PRESENT OPPORTUNITY IN SOUTH ASIA MUST BE SEIZED IF PEACE WAS TO BE ACHIEVED. KAUL HOPED US WOULD ENCOURAGE HIM IN THIS DIRECTION DURING TALKS HERE. ALSO HOPED THAT US WOULD GIVE BHUTTO NO ENCOURAGEMENT TO SUPPORT BHUTTO'S TALK OF NEED FOR MILITARY PARITY WITH INDIA. WHAT US SAID TO BHUTTO WAS NOT FOR INDIA TO DECIDE BUT IT HOPED WE WOULD STRESS, AS FRIEND OF PAKISTAN, THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO PEACE.

3. IN STRICT CONFIDENCE KAUL SAID HE ALSO WISHED TO EXPRESS SOME CONCERN OVER ATTITUDES OF AZIZ AHMED. HE WAS ABLE BUT RATHER HARD LINER ON INDIA AND INCLINED TO EFFORTS TO SCORE POINTS AGAINST INDIA. THAT KIND OF CONFIDENTIAL

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APPROACH INCONSISTENT WITH CURRENT ATMOSPHERE.

4. KAUL THEN TURNED TO UPCOMING SHAH VISIT, NOTING INDIA'S WARM DESIRE FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH IRAN. INDIA GENUINELY BELIEVED THAT PEACE AND GOOD WILL BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN AND BETWEEN INDIA AND IRAN WERE COMPLEMENTARY AND IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL CONCERNED. HE HOPED US WOULD USE OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND SHAH OF THIS FACT. GOI HAD REPORTS THAT CERTAIN AMOUNTS OF ARMS HAD PASSED OR MAY PASS TO PAKISTAN FROM IRAN AND POSE A THREAT TO INDIA. AMB KAUL SAID HE HAD EXPRESSED EARLIER TO SECRETARY ROGERS INDIA'S VIEW THAT IF USG COULD PROVIDE ASSURANCES THAT THIS KIND OF THIRD COUNTRY TRANSFER WOULD

NOT OCCUR IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL FOR US-INDIA RELATIONS AND ASSUAGE PUBLIC CONCERNS IN INDIA, PARTICULARLY IF ASSURANCES WERE OF KIND THAT COULD BE USED IN PARLIAMENT.

5. LASTLY, KAUL SAID HE WISHED ALSO TO TALK ABOUT US-INDIA BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. HE HAD COME TO US WITH DIRECTIVE FROM MRS. GANDHI THAT INDIA DESIRED NOT ONLY TO NORMALIZE BUT TO STRENGTHEN BILATERAL TIES ON BASIS NEW REALITIES IN SOUTH ASIA AND IN CONTEXT MUTUAL RESPECT

AND RECIPROCITY. THERE WOULD BE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES ON OCCASION BUT THERE WERE NO BASIC PROBLEMS. HE WAS AWARE THAT THERE HAD BEEN CONCERN HERE OVER PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY INDIAN LEADERS; SUCH STATEMENTS SHOULD BE SEEN IN THEIR HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND RECOGNIZING THAT THEY HAD NOT BEEN MEANT TO DERROGATE BUT MORE TO CLARIFY AND CONTRIBUTE TO BETTER BASIS FOR UNDERSTANDING. AS FRIENDS, NEITHER US NOR INDIA SHOULD BE OVERLY SENSITIVE; THERE SHOULD BE AN END TO "ONE UPSMANSHIP" ; NEITHER SHOULD KEEP ANYTHING IN HIS HEART AGAINST THE OTHER.

6. KAUL ALSO EXPRESSED HIS OPTIMISM FOR PROGRESS IN BILATERAL SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL RELATIONS. NOTED ALSO HIS CONVERSATION WITH SECRETARY BUTZ EARLIER IN DAY REGARDING INDIAN FOODGRAINS AND INDIA'S STRONG HOPE THAT US COULD ASSIST IN FACILITATING INDIAN PROCUREMENT ON WHATEVER BASIS USG CHOSE TO ACT.

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7. DEPSEC RESPONDED WITH STRONG REAFFIRMATION USG SUPPORT FOR SIMLA PROCESS. NOTED MAJOR OBSTACLE REPRESENTED BY WAR CRIMES ISSUE AND RECALLED THAT DURING HIS VISIT TO BANGALDESH IN APRIL HE HAD INDICATED WITHOUT TRYING TO INFLUENCE BDG DECISION, THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS AREA COULD HAVE MAJOR PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT ON NEGOTIATING ATMOSPHERE.

8. WITH RESPECT TO POINTS MADE BY KAUL ON ARMS POLICY, DEPSEC DESCRIBED RESTRAINTS BUILT INTO US POLICY WHICH HE NOTED CONTRASTED SHARPLY WITH ARMS SALES BY RUSSIA, FRANCE AND OTHERS IN AREA. AS FOR IRAN, HE HAD TALKED AT LENGTH WITH SHAH IN APRIL AND WAS CONVINCED THAT SHAH WAS AND WOULD BE STRONG FACTOR FOR PEACE IN AREA. DEPSEC BELIEVED SHAH TO BE AS MUCH AWARE OF IMPORTANCE OF STRONG AND STABLE PAKISTAN. SINCE THAT SEEMED TO BE INDIA'S INTEREST AS WELL, DEPSEC SAID HE THOUGHT INDIAN AND IRANIAN INTERESTS IN AREA WERE THE SAME. THEREFORE IT SEEMED TO HIM THAT INDIA'S FEARS OF PAKISTAN WERE NOT REALISTIC.

9. USG WOULD DO ALL IT COULD TO CONTRIBUTE TO PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN AREA. IT ALSO SHARES IMPORTANCE KAUL HAD

EXPRESSED ABOUT PROGRESS IN US-INDIA RELATIONS. PROGRESS THERE, HOWEVER, WOULD REQUIRE BOTH COUNTRIES TO WORK ON IT. ON THAT SCORE, HE NOTED THAT US WAS COUNTRY WHERE PUBLIC MEDIA PLAYED IMPORTANT ROLE IN DETERMINING PUBLIC OPINION AND ATTITUDES, AND INDIA SHOULD BE ALERT TO THAT FACT IN STATEMENTS THAT WERE MADE ABOUT OUR BILATERAL TIES. USG DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE BUILDING BETTER TIES SYMBOLIZED BY AUTHORIZATION JUST GIVEN AMB. MOYNIHAN TO

BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS ON RUPEES. WE WOULD DO OUR BEST IN THAT AREA AS WELL AS ON FOOD SITUATION, WHERE AMBAS-SADOR KNEW STRONG LIMITATIONS THAT APPLIED.

10. AT END OF CONVERSATION KAUL RETURNED TO ECONOMIC MATTERS, EXPRESSING HOPE THAT US WOULD BE ABLE TO COME TO EARLY DECISION ON WHAT WAS FEASIBLE AND POSSIBLE IN BILATERAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE SINCE GOI NEEDED TO KNOW FOR ITS PLANNING PURPOSES. DELAY MIGHT ALSO UNFAIRLY CONTRIBUTE TO INTERPRETATION AS TO HOW US VIEWED ITS CONFIDENTIAL

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FUTURE TIES WITH INDIA. SAME SITUATION APPLIED TO DEBT RESCHEDULING ISSUE WITHIN CONSORTIUM CONTEXT. ON THIS, KAUL NOTED THAT GOI COULD NOT GO BEYOND STATEMENT MADE TO CONSORTIUM DURING LAST YEAR'S RESCHEDULING EXERCISE AS TO POSSIBILITIES FOR RESCHEDULING FROM NON-CONSORTIUM MEMBERS. RUSH

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